





A



# FEW HINTS

RELATIVE TO

## Cutaneous Complaints.

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BY T. M. KELSON.

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*SEVENOAKS:*

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## PREFACE.

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*BY taking this mode of addressing the public, I shall probably incur that odium medicum, usually attached to persons professing to have superior practical skill; more particularly, if they show a disposition to deviate from the common line of practice.*

*To pretend to be exclusively in possession of specific means of cure, and to withhold those means from the profession, I must acknowledge, carries with it rather an air of Quackery; but I flatter myself, my immediate medical and other friends will give me credit*  
A. *for*

*for not having a particle of that sort of spirit in my composition.*

*It is only to further my practice fairly, and, I am sure, honestly, that induces me to subscribe my name to this questionable publication.*

*T. M. K.*

*SEVENOAKS,  
December 1st, 1814.*

A FEW

HINTS, &c.

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I HAVE long been in the habit of treating and managing cutaneous complaints, in a manner peculiar to myself. Hitherto I have taken no other than merely accidental means to make it known to the public: nevertheless, my practice has been extensive, and, I can say, uniformly successful, in all cases which I have voluntarily undertaken, and where my directions have been observed and strictly pursued; as can be attested by numbers of the first families in the kingdom.

I have

I have often been pressed to make myself more useful, by residing in London, or by writing on the subject. I am partial to the country, and much too well satisfied with my present situation, ever to think of any change. My time, also, has been generally so completely occupied in other professional pursuits, as to deprive me of the inclination, and almost the power, of calling the attention of the public to this particular branch of my practice; but lately, having, from a severe accident, suffered a long confinement, I had leisure to arrange a few ideas, and thus I introduce them to the public, rather as an advertisement than a treatise; the essential part, the remedy, being omitted; it not being convenient, at present, to allow my brother practitioners to participate in my emoluments.

Imperceptibly



Imperceptibly I have been led to attend to all kinds of cutaneous affections; but the complaint, by which my name first obtained some little celebrity, is that which is so frequently the torment of young people, usually termed a pimpled face.

Some systematic writers have pointed out many varieties of this eruption: I know of none. What they describe as varieties, are only different stages of the disorder. Whether small-pox be in its earliest or latest stage, it is still small-pox, though its form may alter ever so much.

This eruption invariably begins to make its appearance at the approach of puberty; and almost exclusively in young people of phlegmatic habits, and languid circulation, with feeble powers of cutaneous excretion.

It

It is always confined to the face, neck, and back.

It is more frequent with young women; but generally more severe with young men. These persons, if not tormented with medicine, or torn to pieces with fretting, usually enjoy good health; it being merely a local and partial affection of the skin, not in the least interfering with the general animal economy. Should there be, at the same time, ever so much constitutional mischief existing in the habit, I will not allow this particular affection of the skin to be at all connected with it. Therefore, by removing the eruption, there can be no hazard of producing internal disorders. Indeed, were it otherwise, my mode of cure comes rather under the idea of extirpation, than repulsion.

Various

Various are the supposed causes of this disorder. Some attribute its origin to bile, indigestion, and other affections of the stomach and viscera; to the sudden exposure to cold when heated, or drinking of cold things in that state, &c. All those ideas are certainly erroneous. The immediate and sole cause of the eruption, is the incapacity of the cutaneous glandular system, to throw off the grosser perspirable fluids, which begin to be determined to the surface of the body at this particular period of life.

The approach of this worrying complaint may be first discovered from a slight discoloration of the pores of the chin, nose, and forehead, giving a coarser appearance to the complexion. This discoloration arises from the concreted fluid being detained in the extremities of the pores, and  
exposed

exposed to the atmosphere, forming innumerable black specks. The mouth of the pore thus being completely filled up, the secretion still going on, a substance is collected, taking the shape of the duct, and forming, when squeezed out, a worm-like appearance. This deposit, after a certain time, gets into a morbid state, exciting inflammation, tumor, and suppuration; or, perhaps, more frequently, this crisis is caused by distension.

In cold, phlegmatic habits, which, I before observed, were usually the subjects of this disorder, nature will submit to this impeded secretion for a length of time, and is only called into activity by the stimuli of strong exercise, drinking of too much wine, hot rooms, &c. Thus, to these stimulants to cutaneous circulation and secretion, the source and origin of the eruption have

have been attributed ; when they are only exciting causes, by rousing an inactive habit, sufficiently to throw off this viscous humour, as it would any other extraneous substance.

Sometimes, even after inflammation has taken place, the tubercles will recede, and be removed by the absorbent system, without suppurating, as in the case of other threatened abscesses : but the more common and natural termination, is by suppuration.

It has also been observed, that this eruption will sometimes disappear in illness, and return as health is restored. Therefore, confusing cause and effect, it has been thought, in certain constitutions, greatly to influence the general health, when it evidently can have no such power. Its disappearance is the effect, not the cause, of illness. It is the  
result

result of a new action, from the agency of another disease. When universal emaciation, from fever or other severe illness, takes place, frequently even the morbid collections of the body will be absorbed, and thrown out of the habit, as well as the more healthy.

Perchance, this accidental indisposition may take place during the time that topical remedies are using. The application will then be the supposed cause of illness, and thus the practice be brought into disrepute.

This false reasoning I am most anxious to rectify. Of nothing in my profession am I more confident, than I am of the independance of this complaint to the general constitution. Those impressions and principles have ever influenced my practice. Merely by local and topical remedies, without  
a particle



a particle of medicine, have I eradicated this eruption in numberless cases. In one solitary instance only, has there been the least suspicion that mischief to the constitution has ensued, and that, certainly, without any ground whatever\*.

The disgusting appearance of this eruption, in its aggravated forms, might be to many a sufficient inducement to hazard much in its removal; but, if I apprehended there was the least risk of sacrificing health by it, the public would not have been troubled with this publication.

I wish to distinguish from the complaint I have been treating of, that red

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\* Since the above was written, I have learnt that the lady above alluded to, has perfectly recovered her health, and not at the expence of her complexion.

and

and unequal appearance of the surface of the nose, and other parts of the face, which takes place later in life, not always, but frequently, the consequence of hard living. Though somewhat similar in its appearance, it is essentially different: the one is an impediment in the ducts of the sebaceous glands; the other is a disease and an enlargement of the glands themselves, and is much more obstinate of cure. When it is the result of inebriety, it cannot be removed but by a change of system; and that, if it have been long established, will not always succeed.

Some young persons, also, will have flushed faces, and a degree of inequality in the skin, from hereditary predisposition, a bad state of stomach, or other causes, differing totally from those producing the pimpled face, which has been usually termed *my case*:



*case*: to those unfortunate persons, I can promise but little relief; the removal of it altogether, is seldom to be accomplished.

Red spots, from varicose and radiated vessels, will arise frequently in different parts of the face; those, when distinct, are to be destroyed with little difficulty. But this disposition will, sometimes, in the decline of life, extend over a large surface, and, when in the cheeks, will produce a colour, appearing at a distance not unpleasant; but, if closely examined, it may be discovered to be the consequence of enlarged cutaneous vessels spreading in all directions; and, if not checked, will extend to the nose, and terminate in the worst kind of flushed face. This derangement of skin comes also within my means of cure, provided it have not its origin in too good living.

The

The purport of this publication, being solely to make myself more generally known to the public as a practical man, and not to assume the character of an elaborate author or a theorist, I shall only further notice, and that generally, (having ever held nice classification as trifling,) those chronic affections of the skin, which terminate in scurfy and scabby incrustations. If they be confined to the scalp, they are usually termed a scalled head. In that shape the disease is most common.

The same disposition will not unfrequently extend to the body and extremities, spreading most rapidly over larger surfaces, causing almost insupportable itching and irritation.

Children from their infancy are liable to this disease: in puberty it is frequently lost.

No

No doubt it proceeds from a scrofulous taint. How it is occasionally called into action, is not so easily understood; the exciting causes being very obscure.

It occurs more generally in the spring and autumn; but seasons do not always govern.

A person in perfect health is attacked with this complaint, and no illness is produced by the effort of throwing it off; but great inconveniences will frequently arise, if the vitiated fluid be permitted to concrete, and remain too long on the surface; getting into a morbid state, and then received back into the habit, through the absorbent system, causing swelled glands, abscesses, and other ailments.

In

In this and other pustular diseases, which terminate in scabbing, I depend, as in the preceding complaints, very little on internal remedies. In debilitated habits, I have recourse to such medicines as are usually given to invigorate the constitution, and restore general health; but the eruption itself, though it be ever so extensive, will always yield to external applications, if rightly and judiciously applied.

The more formidable and obstinate of cure, is that affection of the scalp, which is usually termed the ring-worm. It occurs generally in young subjects, and is of a very contagious nature. When it has been of long standing, it is a most tiresome disease. I have had more trouble in removing it, than any other affection of the skin. In recent cases I never found any difficulty.

There

There are also certain vesicular eruptions, of the erysipelatous kind, which also terminate in a sort of scurf or scabbing. These will sometimes spread with much acrimony, and run on to a great length of time, the eruption being successive: one set of vesicles drying off, others immediately forming in the adjoining parts, and terminating in a similar manner. This disorder, like the former, is not to be managed by medicine; but to be treated, as is my custom with almost every other cutaneous affection, wholly as a business of surgery. I have very seldom had occasion to call in the aid of medicine.

If, hereafter, it should appear, that I have contributed by my practice, to elucidate and simplify the treatment of eruptive complaints, the merit will rest solely on my endeavours to remove

it from the intricate province of the physician, to the more simple department of the surgeon:

THE END.





